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OPENING
OF
THE HOME FOR CONSUMPTIVES,

CHESTNUT HILL,
AND THE
ADDRESS OF REV. BENJAMIN WATSON, D. D.
ON THE OCCASION
MONDAY, MAY 3, 1886.

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THE HOME FOR CONSUMPTIVES.

DEDICATION OF THE NEW BUILDINGS.

The opening services at the Home for Consumptives, at Chestnut Hill, were held on the afternoon of May 3d, 1886. A service of dedication had been set forth, and, at the appointed hour, the Bishop, preceded by a large number of the clergy of the diocese, entered the chapel, repeating alternately the 145th Psalm. The request for the dedication of the House was read by William S. Lane, Esq., of the Board of Council, and the sentence of consecration by the Rev. Dr. Richard Newton. The Rev. Dr. D. S. Miller and the Rev. Messrs. J. D. Newlin, H. L. Duhring, and W. H. Graff assisted the Bishop in the services. An address was delivered by the Rev. Dr. B. Watson, which, by resolution of the Board of Council, is appended to this report. The Bishop followed with a few earnest words of counsel and congratulation. At the conclusion of the service in the chapel, the choristers and clergy proceeded to the cottage, where the Rev. Samuel Durborow, Superintendent of the City Mission, read the special prayers as they had been appointed, and the Bishop pronounced the Benediction.

ADDRESS BY THE REV. BENJAMIN WATSON, D. D., AT THE DEDICATION OF THE HOME FOR CONSUMPTIVES:

CHARITY NEVER FAILETH. We all know what the Apostle meant when he wrote these golden words: that while those other "gifts" of which he speaks—"prophecies"—"tongues"—"knowledge"—are for this life, and, for us, shall "fail" when "we fail," charity, or love, shall be as much ours in eternity, as in time, in "the heavenly places," as amidst these earthly

scenes. The words of the poet are only those of the apostle amplified :

“True love is indestructible,
Its holy flame forever burneth,
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth.” .

But I think we may venture to evolve an additional meaning out of those words. Charity never fails in *this* sense also, that it never exhausts itself, never falls into decrepitude, never wearies in well-doing. It is like “a tree planted by the water-side, that bringeth forth its fruit in due season ;” or like that tree in the midst of the Paradise of God, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding her fruit every month ; whose leaves were for the healing of the nations. And, mayhap, that very tree is this Charity or Divine Love.

If there is one decisive mark of a living church, it is the presence and exercise in it of this heavenly grace. And when any professing church shall wane as a light-bearer, in this regard, may we not take up the words of our Lord to that church of old, and apply them to *her*, in warning : “Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works ; or else I will come to thee and will move thy candle-stick out of its place, except thou repent ?”

God be thanked, that while to that ancient church in Ephesus, the exalted Saviour was thus constrained to speak, our modern church in Philadelphia, by His grace, has been enabled to keep its light of love burning ever more and more brightly !

We say this, not in boasting, not in a spirit of self-satisfaction, but in humble thankfulness for His great mercy, which has thus put it into the hearts of His people here to go on and on in their works of charity and beneficence.

When I entered upon the ministry in this diocese, and in this city, now upwards of forty years ago, though there was much zeal in the church, and, I doubt not, “fire of love,” too ; yet, for the most part, it was expended in *parochial* efforts, in bringing souls to Christ, (great and glorious work !) and in building

them up in their Christian life. But a time speedily arrived when a voice came to it: "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." And that "other" was the great work of charitable endeavor for the good of those who were outside the folds, for the blessing both of their bodies and their souls. And that voice was hearkened to. Thenceforth began an era of church building, when rapidly church after church arose, mainly through the efforts and agency of certain noble-hearted laymen, whose names some of us can recall, and who shall be had in everlasting remembrance. Then came the planning and building of our magnificent hospital, the second or third of such institutions with which our city is now so largely furnished. The old Episcopal Academy was resuscitated for the instruction of our youth; the Divinity School was instituted and endowed for the training of our own young men, and those from other parts, for the sacred ministry; the City Mission, with its wide-reaching designs in behalf of the poor and neglected, was established; and the Sheltering Arms, for enfolding babes who had none to care for them, and who, left to such public provision as had heretofore been made, had perished literally as sheep for the slaughter. Other agencies might be enumerated, were this the time and the place. But now we are called upon to speak more particularly of *one* of those just mentioned, in connection with which has grown the occasion which has brought us together for this service to-day. I refer to "the City Mission of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Philadelphia."

To our present revered and beloved Diocesan are due both the conception and the organization of that agency of our church for doing good. Established now sixteen years ago, it had for its original aim, mainly, the seeking and saving of those for whose souls no man seemed to care, the unfortunate, the degraded, and the poverty-stricken; in carrying to them the blessings of the gospel in their own homes, (if homes they could be called), and in the various beneficent, reformatory,

and punitive institutions among us; and in the establishing of Mission Sunday Schools, as the *nuclei* for churches in the time to come. In doing this, especially in the house to house ministration, it was soon discovered that to carry spiritual food *alone* to the physically hungry and necessitous seemed almost a mockery; and was certainly very unlike the way in which He, our great Head and Exemplar, "went about doing good." There was thus forced upon the Mission, if it would prosecute its work with any consistency or effect, the necessity of doing what could be done, with the means in its hands, towards supplying this defect; and thus the *eleemosynary* came to be grafted on the original strictly religious design. Having thus started in that direction, one class of sufferers, poverty-stricken and diseased, by oft coming in contact with it, was brought to its particular attention: the class of sufferers from that dread disease, *consumption*. Sick and needy. How ominous the coupling of those two words; either of which, in what it represents, is distressing enough. But when the first of them means a long-continued wasting of vital strength and energy, ever downward to the tomb, then, in combination with the last, the case becomes pitiable indeed, and one to call forth our deepest commiseration. And such is that which then presented itself to those of the City Mission, who, as its agents, went on their errands of mercy. The call for entering upon a new field of benevolence, in its amelioration, was thus brought home to the Mission. And thus began that special department of its work, the *caring for consumptives*. At first, this was restricted to doing what was possible for their comfort, in the way of providing proper nutriment and medical attendance, with kindly visitation, *in their own abodes*; which has always constituted, and still continues to be, the principal ministration of the Mission's charitable endeavors in that direction. Meanwhile, by the donation to the Mission of what is known as the House of Mercy, by Mr. and Mrs. Harry Ingersoll, (the former of whom has now, within a few days, after a life of much well-doing, gone to his reward), the Mission

was able to make provision, to a limited extent, for those who were homeless and friendless, receiving them under its entire care, till death should release them from all need of human sympathy. So the good work went on, accomplishing as much as possible with the means provided: those means, however, yearly increasing as the work itself became increasingly known. At length, some five years since, there came, in the good Providence of God, that large accession to those means in the shape of the Mary Shield's legacy, amounting in all to nearly, if not quite, two hundred thousand dollars. With this, of course, the work began to be greatly enlarged; but with it also came the responsibility of so conducting the work as to make that large sum available to the greatest amount of good. This it was deemed could best be done by securing a more extensive HOME for the objects of the charity, than the House of Mercy afforded; and to this the Board directed its efforts: efforts which, for a time, were frustrated, partly by the difficulty of finding a suitable house for the purpose, and partly, when such was found, from the unwillingness of neighbors, in a built-up street, to have such an institution in their immediate vicinity. Then it was that our good friend, Mr. William Bucknell, to whom we must ever feel most largely indebted, moved by an almost life-long, and I may say inherited, interest in this class of the afflicted, came to our relief; and by the transfer of this extensive and valuable estate on which we now are, enabled the Board to arise and build; and having completed their building, this day (as has been done) to consecrate the edifice to its humane and pious purpose: its existence due, under God, to the benevolent thoughtfulness of one who, in her last testament, kindly remembered the cause, and to the large generosity and sympathy of another, who is with us still, as we trust he will long continue to be, to see the fruit of his, as we cannot but regard it, wise benefaction.

The disease we denominate consumption, is one whose ravages are appalling, not only in this country, but almost all

the world over. In this city alone, the deaths by consumption, during the past year, numbered twenty-eight hundred and twenty-one; and in the last twenty-four years aggregated over fifty-six thousand. In the entire land, the yearly average of deaths by consumption is ninety-one thousand five hundred. And be it remembered, these are from, not the whole population of adults and children combined, but from the adult portion of the population exclusively; thus making that average still more striking and frightful. Considering which, it is very remarkable that hitherto so little has been done for their care—I mean of those who *need* our care—there being, as a rule, no place for them in our general hospitals, and if there were, ordinarily no provision in such hospitals for their peculiar needs. When it is considered how large is the number of those afflicted with this malady, and of them how many must be among the poor and destitute, and how prolonged is the period of their sufferings, we can easily calculate the amount of misery falling to the lot of humanity from this single source.

In preparing to open these buildings for their work, the Board having it in charge were much exercised as to what *class* of consumptive patients should come within its scope. Up to the present time, only those have been cared for by the Mission who were in the more advanced stages of the disease, and whose case was deemed hopeless. Should this course be continued? was with them the question; or should they include *with* these those who were in its earlier stages, and whose case might *not* be hopeless: not only with a view to their *care*, but to their possible relief? After deliberate consideration, they have concluded to adopt, as an experiment at least, the latter course. And that for the reason—that while, by admitting those of the latter class, we shall, as we hope and believe, be benefitting *them*, we shall also be removing from the *former*, in a measure at least, the very natural dread which they have of entering a door over which despair seems to be inscribed, to whom the door of entrance is as to the house of

death—thereby (and here we speak from past observation) lessening the number of those for whom the charity is provided. In other words, if “Hope for all” may not be written over our portals, it will not be “Despair for all.” And so the title by which this Institution will be known is—THE HOME FOR CONSUMPTIVES: FOR THEIR RELIEF AND CARE.

For their RELIEF as well as for their care. But is not that a Quixotic undertaking? In the beautiful Isle of Wight, on its southern shore, near the town of Ventnor, and sheltered from the north winds by lofty cliffs, stands a comely range of buildings, known as “The National Hospital for Consumption and Diseases of the Chest.” Overlooking the English Channel, and fanned by the soft breezes that are wafted from it, and in every respect adapted to the use for which it was designed, that hospital is doing an effective work in relieving those who are brought within its walls. It admits, to be sure, only those who are in the incipient stages; but they are such as, if left alone, would undoubtedly, for the most part, go on with various degrees of progress, to the fatal end. It was in the summer of 1877 that I visited the hospital; and then first learned its value, and the hope there might still be for those—some of them at least—whom I had been accustomed to look upon as doomed. I have now before me (as I write) the annual report for 1883, including that of the Medical Board, which concludes with these words: “On the whole, it may safely be said there has been no falling off in the usefulness of the Institution, but rather that the results of the year give substantial encouragement to all who directly or indirectly lend their aid towards the realization of the objects for which this Hospital was founded.” The view thus taken by the founders and managers of that hospital is coincided in by medical men among ourselves; namely, that under proper treatment, consumption, if taken in time, may be made, in many cases, to disappear, and restoration to health follow. Encouraged by such testimony, the managers of this Home have made provision for the *curative* treatment of those who shall be brought hither, by the

construction of its buildings with a direct view to that end, and by the appointment of a staff of medical advisers, most of whom have made diseases of the chest their specialty in study and practice. We have not here the mild and equable climate of Ventnor; but we have a pure and exhilarating air; while in the cottage (so called) already erected, and in those which will follow it, the rule of *separation* is provided for, and the securing of as much sunlight as possible, both so necessary for success in such an undertaking.

The cottages, we say, that will FOLLOW the one now built, and presently to be thrown open for occupancy. Are we too sanguine in our expectation that this will be *speedily*? The Board proposes to reserve intact so much of the legacy to which allusion has been already made, as still remains, amounting to one hundred and sixty thousand dollars, as a permanent endowment; and therefore looks for *additional* gifts to add to the buildings already erected. Twelve thousand dollars will build such a cottage as that which has now been dedicated. Are there not, in this community, those who will join to this one another, and to those, yet others; so that in no great length of time, the whole number of twelve, contemplated in our plans, will have been erected? Considering the need, as we have seen, what more *useful* charity could be thus advanced? What more *touching* to the heart, sensitive to human suffering, and longing to do something for its relief? With God's blessing, what a noble institution, in time, this may become, throwing its sheltering wings, and healing influences, over hundreds and thousands, who might, otherwise, be battling hopelessly with poverty, weakness, and pain. We have to-day invoked that blessing. We believe that it will follow; and that that church which already gives so many signs of a spirit of love working in her, will not fail us here. "Let Thy work, O Lord, appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands, establish Thou it!"

